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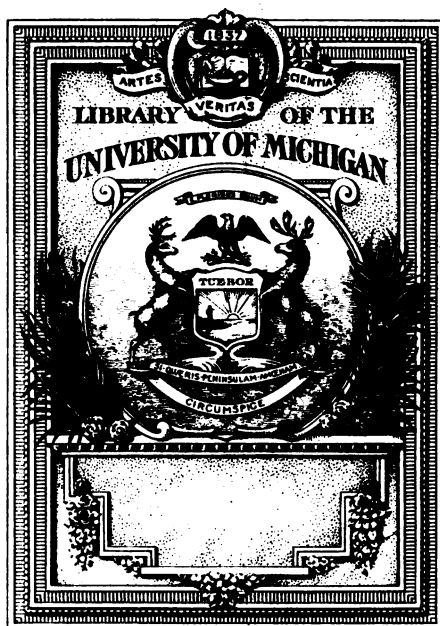
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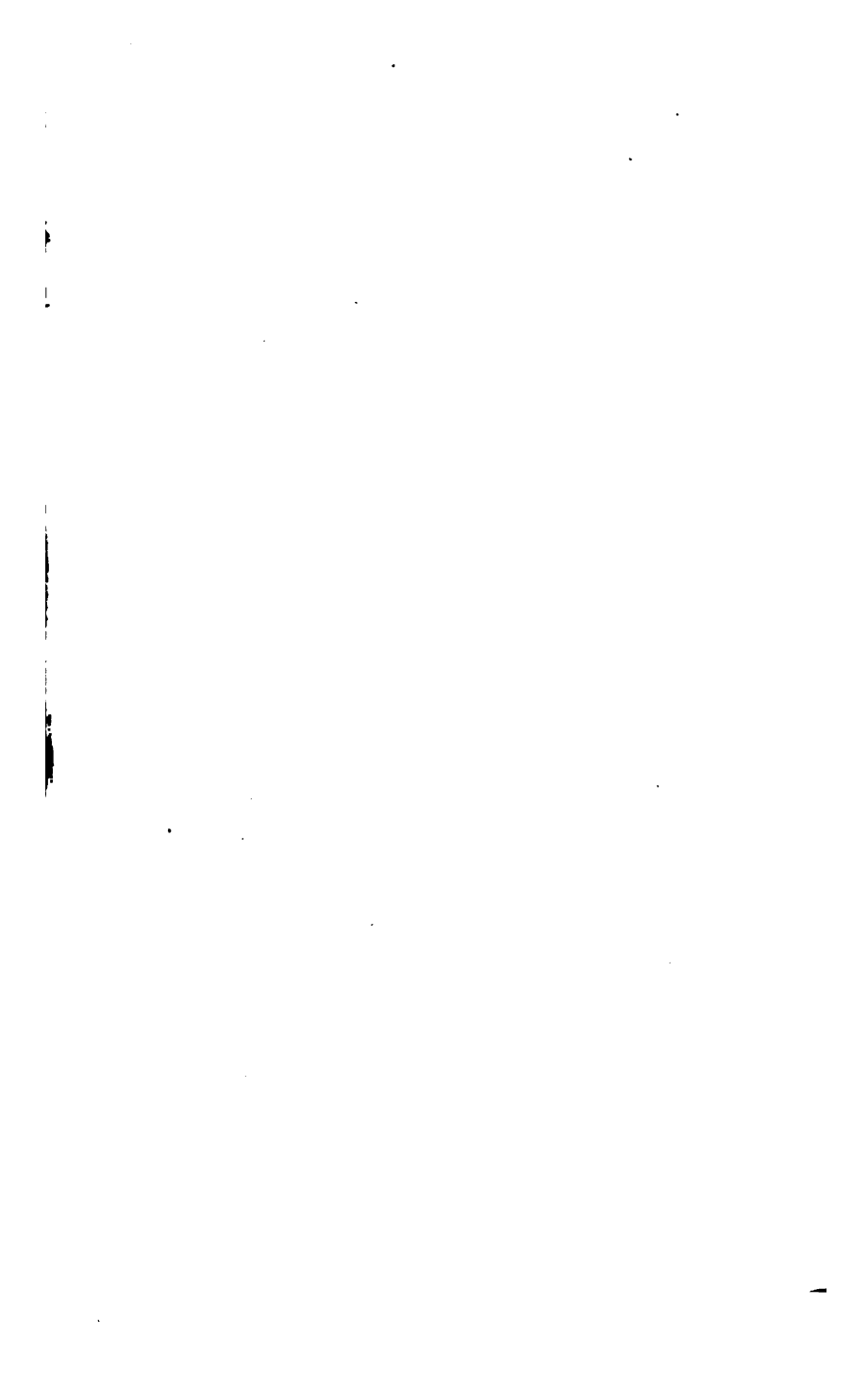
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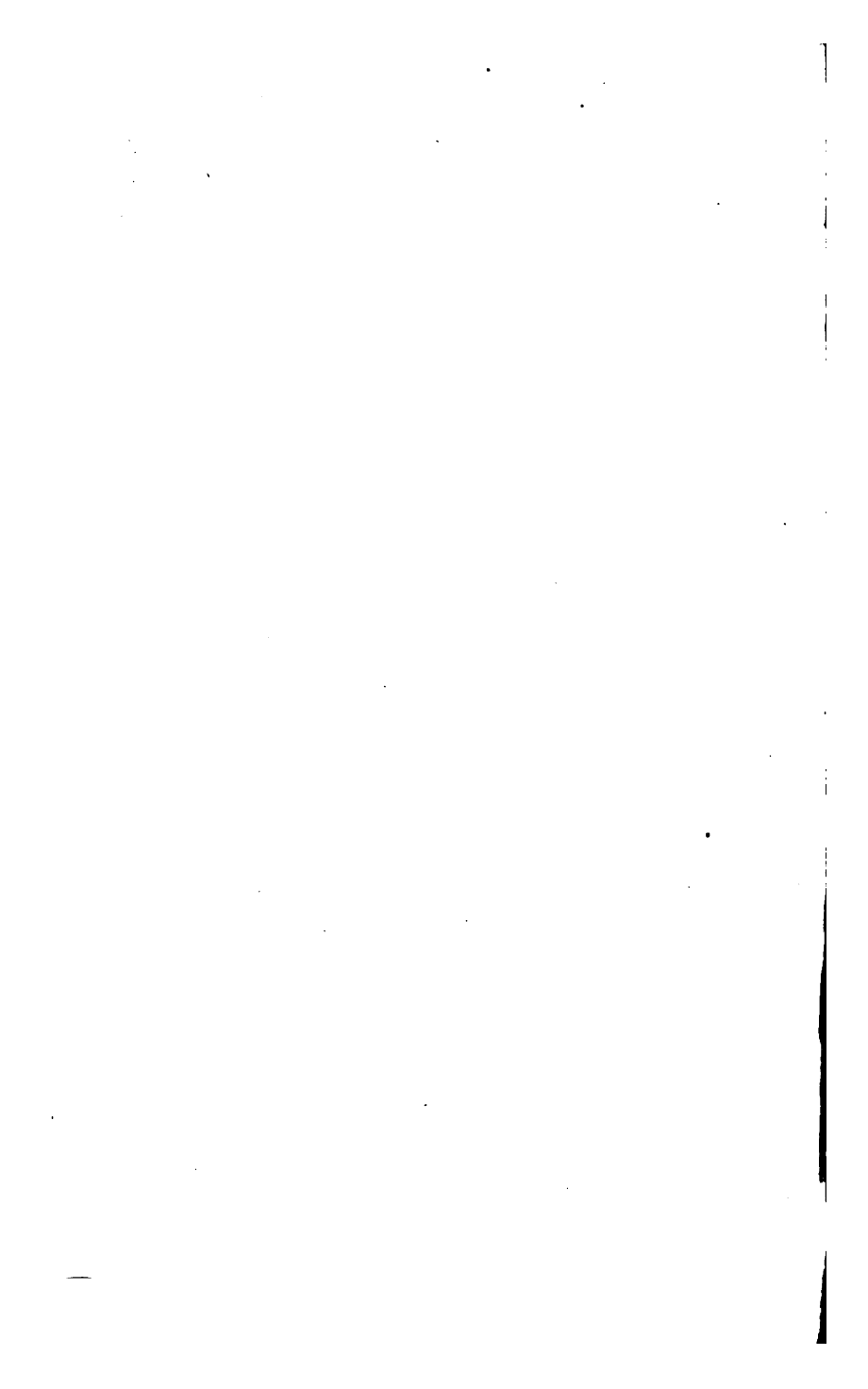
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Budgell, Eustace
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363

HISTORY

O F

PRIME MINISTERS

I N

GREAT BRITAIN.

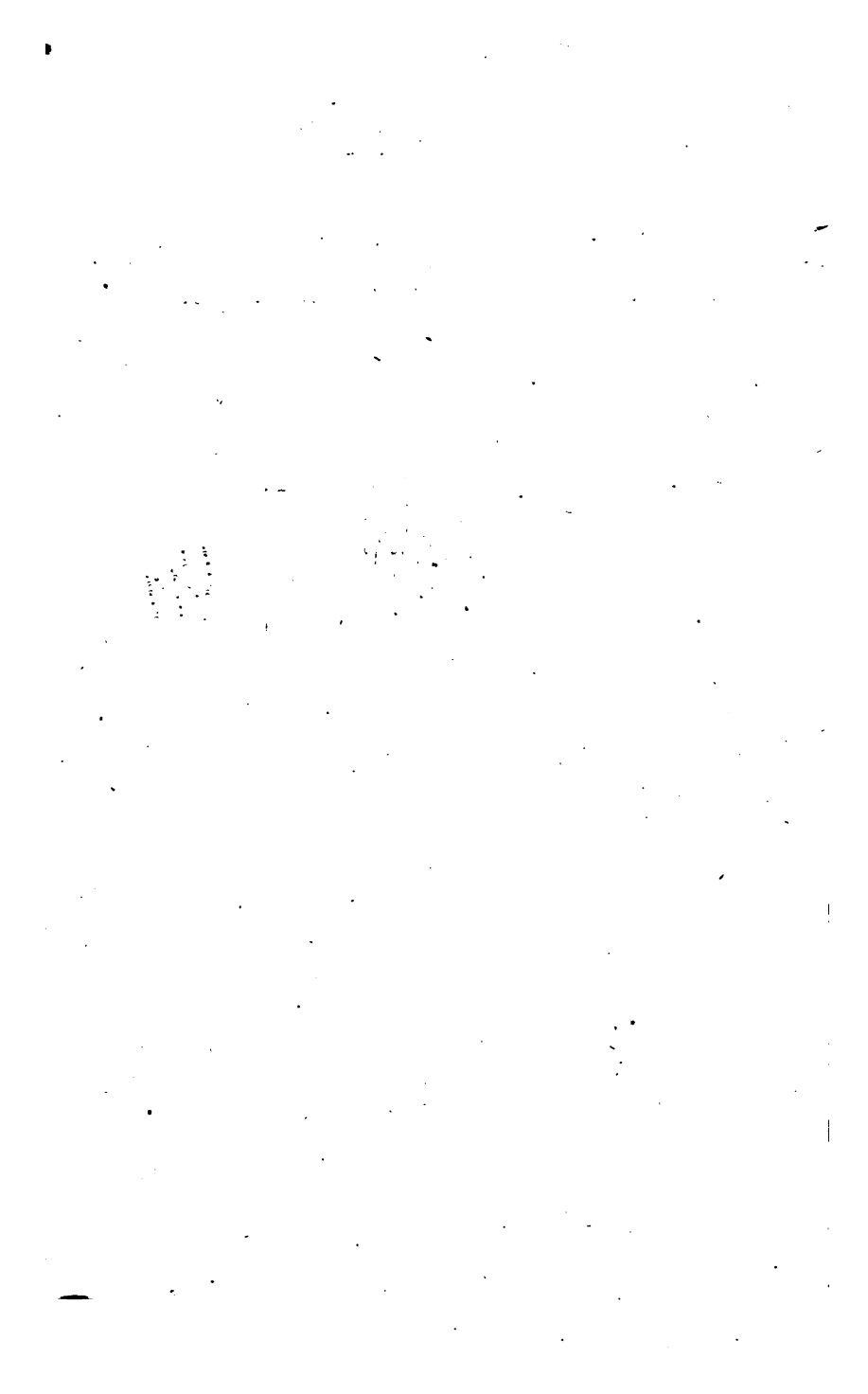
—Nam qui nimios optabat honores
Et nimias posebat opes, numerosa parabat
Excelsæ turris tabulata, unde altior esset
Casus, & impulsæ præceps immane Ruinæ.
Quid Crassos, quid Pompeios evertit, et illum
Ad sua qui domitos deduxit flagra Quirites?
SUMMUS nempe Locus, nulla non arte petitus.

Juv.

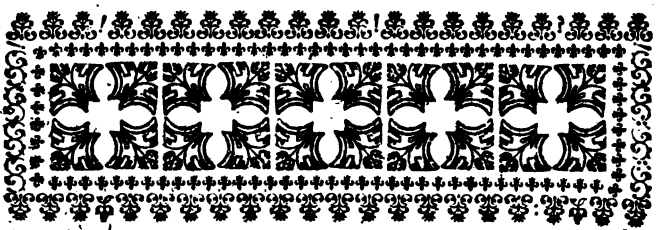


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A S H O R T

HISTORY

O F

Prime Ministers, &c.



It has been the just Observation of Travellers, that no one Man is more to be distinguished from another by his Features, than one Nation is from another by its peculiar Turn of Genius. The Manners of every Country are so adapted to the particular Form of Government, that prevails amongst them, that it is scarce possible to alter the *one*, without first debauching the *other*. The several Revolutions, that have happened in the States of *Europe*, are so many Demonstrations of this Truth. It seems indeed to have been the Wisdom of Providence to establish so evident a Test, by which every Nation might plainly perceive what Steps must naturally lead to their Destruction, that so no Nation might be destroyed, but by its own Consent. If therefore at

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any Time a **FREE PEOPLE** (by Nature hardy, by Custom frugal and industrious, and by their Situation incapable of subsisting but by their own Labour, Manufactures and Trade) should behold Luxury, Sloth, Vice and Corruption breaking in upon them, like a Torrent; and should discover a *Man in high Station* to be the Promoter of this destructive Change of Manners; they can no longer doubt that He is engaged in a Design to enslave them. And if such a Nation should tamely suffer their *Corrupter* to continue in the Exercise of Power, they may justly be accused of consenting to their own Ruin; for Statesmen are not easily frightened from their Purpose; much less are they subject to Repentance for their Crimes. Necessity drives them on; and He, who has once made an open Attack upon the Constitution of his Country, will never think himself safe from publick Justice, but by its total Subversion; which therefore He must accomplish at the Peril of his Head.

There is no *Singularity* in the Genius of the *British* Nation, that has been more remarked by Foreigners, nor more censured by polite Writers (who were born under absolute Governments) than our *strong Inclination to a Change of Ministers*; but had these Gentlemen been better acquainted with us, they would have found this *Love of Change* never grew to any Height till the Power, which our Constitution distributes amongst *several Ministers*, was all centred in *one Man*. And to our Honour be it said, there is no Turn more peculiar to a *Briton*, none that has more frequently preserved our Liberties, than that insuperable Hatred to a **PRIME MINISTER**, which has always prevailed in this Kingdom. It may well be called our *Palladium*. Whilst we retain *That*, our Constitution must be out of Danger; whensoever we are debauched
from

from it, we, like the rest of our Neighbours, must become *Slaves*. For it seems next to an Impossibility, that *Great Britain* should be ripened for Chains, but by such a *Creature of Power*; and proportioned to the Hazard our Constitution is in by a PRIME MINISTER, has been the national Antipathy in all Ages to this *Preliminary Tyrant*.

Whilst Power is lodged in many Hands, we both obey and cherish it. There is nothing in it to alarm us. *Several great and able Men*, jointly engaged in one *Administration*, but acting independant of one another in their different Stations, is the only Model of Government suited to the Legislature, suited to the very Genius of the *British Nation*. *Ministers*, on such a Foot, are mutual Checks upon each other; each of them has his distinct Set of Adherents, some of whom Alliance, Friendship, Esteem, and perhaps Expectations unite in his particular Interest; but his main Support must be the Character he bears in his Country. When a Number of such *great Men* join, they draw with them a large Body of the Nation, and cannot therefore act but upon Principles, that may preserve to *Them* their Popularity amongst their Fellow-Subjects. Such a Ministry is built upon the strong Basis of the *People's Affection*. It is *That*, which gives *Them* Strength to do their Masters Business, and their *Master* can offer such Men no Degrees of Power or Wealth, that would be an Equivalent, even in Point of Interest, to the Loss of their *Character*.

Reverse this noble Prospect, and behold the Power of many Ministers *shrunk up into the Fist of one ambitious Man*. Can such an one subsist by any Art, but That of Corruption? He can have no personal Interest, to draw any *Numbers* along with him. Men of real Worth and Influence in their Country

Country are too much his Equals (perhaps Superiours) not to scorn to act under him. Men of great Abilities will scarce employ them as the *mean Tools* of another's Power. What He wants therefore in *Weight*, the PRIME MINISTER must endeavour to supply in *Numbers*. And as He cannot gain *These* by his natural Strength, he must introduce an *effeminate Luxury*, that may supplant the innate Sturdiness, for which the *English* have so long been famous, and by corrupting our *Manners*, he may come to corrupt our *Votes*. And if he can, by an extravagant Way of living amongst the Gentry, bring many of them into a necessitous Dependance, He may for some Time maintain his Power against the Bent of a whole People. But even This must fail him; for as *Corruption* is the PRIME MINISTER's sole Instrument of State, so That by Degrees will grow so very *craving*, that he will find it hard to satisfy. Then it is, that He becomes desperate in his Projects; his *Creatures* are no longer true to him than whilst they are *feeding*; his other Fellow-Subjects (oppress'd and plundered to gorge *These*) are all united to his Ruin; and he has no other Method left to screen himself from their Resentments, than by throwing into his *Master's* Hand such an *absolute Power*, as may be sufficient to protect him against the whole Kingdom, if his *Master* be weak enough to stand upon the narrow Bottom of his *Minister*.

This has been and This must be the desperate Game of every PRIME MINISTER in this Country. Justly therefore is *such an one* the Object of the People's Hatred. Should we ransack the *British* History, we shall find our wisest Monarchs had no *such Minister*; and amongst *those Princes*, who had, we learn that some were betrayed by their MINION, as soon as He saw the sovereign Power

was too weak to protect him ; others, we read, lost both their Crown and Life in too obstinate an Adherence to a *bated Favourite* ; and some, tho' very few, have saved themselves, by honourably giving up a *wicked Minister* to the Justice of an *injured Nation*. To set This in a clear Light, I shall briefly run through all the Reigns, from the Conquest down to the Restoration.

WILLIAM THE FIRST, who was by Nature ^{1066.} formed to keep, as well as gain a Crown, never would trust his Power in *one Hand*. But when the most potent of his *Ministers* (*Odo*, Bishop of *Bayeux* and Earl of *Kent*) had, by his rapacious Management of the publick Money, amass'd a mighty Treasure, and was forming a Scheme to *establisb himself independent of his Master*, the ^{Kennet's} Historian informs us, that the *wise King* " took ^{Hist. of} him from amidst a Confluence of Noblemen and ^{England} Gentry, who attended on Him, and at once ^{Vol. I.} " disappointed all his ambitious Views, by a strict ^{p. 111.} " Imprisonment, and he was afterwards obliged to " abjure the Realm.

WILLIAM THE SECOND, whom our Histories ^{1087.} represent as a Prince of a fierce and avaritious ^{p. 114.} Temper, was *wholly* under the Influence of *Ra-* ^{Hist. of} *nulph*, Bishop of *Durham*, who, by new Methods of ^{England} squeezing and oppressing the People, so fed his ^{Vol. I.} Master's insatiable Thirst after Money, as to be- ^{p. 117.} come the *principal Director* of his Counsels. His male Administration disposed the Subjects to revolt. One Conspiracy broke out in the Year 1095 ; and another more formidable was ripe for Execution, when the King's Death prevented it. He was killed in the *new Forest* by one *Walter Tyrrel* ; whether by Mischance, or by Design, is not agreed ; but the Historian tells us, " That this Prince ^{ibid.} " might have had an absolute Government of all ^{p. 117.} his

" his Subjects, had he sought it by endearing
 " Acts ; but seeking to establish it by Force, he
 " made both himself and his People miserable.

oo. HENRY THE FIRST, who is justly reckon'd
 amongst the *wisest* of our Princes, had no PRIME
 MINISTER. He sought out the most able Men in
 his Kingdom for the Offices of State, preferring
such only as were acceptable to the *People*. The
 Historian observes, " That he took the best
 Courses to please and gratify his Subjects ; by
 " seeing himself that no *Corruption*, or *Oppression*
 " should burthen the Country ; by making fre-
 " quent Progresses to observe how his Realm was
 " order'd in every Part of it ; by being affable
 " and easy of Access, so that all might enjoy his
 " Company ; and by being hospitable, so that all
 " might share of his good Cheer.

Nothing so much endeared him to the Nation,
 as " the committing to a streight and loathsome
 Prison *Ranulph of Durham*, the PRIME MI-
 NISTER and Oppressor of the former Reign."
 And after That, when one of his own Ministry,
Robert Earl of Mallett, had by his Conduct incur-
 red the People's Hatred, " he first disgraced him,
 " and then stript him of his vast Estate.

KING STEPHEN, according to our Historians,
 " was elected to the Crown upon this Considera-
 " tion ; that by preferring one, whose Title was
 " weak, the Nation might be better secured in
 " their antient Liberties, than they could be un-
 " der one, that came to the Throne by lineal
 " Descent. Accordingly the Fealty sworn to him
 " was upon Condition that he observed the Te-
 " nor of a Charter, wherein the Rights and Li-
 " berties of the Subject were declared." But his
 PRIME MINISTER *Alberic de Ver* having led him
 into arbitrary Measures, the Nation revolted from
 him

him to the *Empress Maud*, who was the rightful Heir of the Crown by Descent. She too had a PRIME MINISTER, the *Bishop of Winchester*, who, though Brother to *Stephen*, had set the Crown on her Head; but in whom she reposed too great a Confidence. For this ambitious Statesman (perceiving the *Londoners* averse to *Maud*, and that the whole Nation began to dislike her) consulted his own Interest by a private Treaty with her Competitor, and having obtained his own Terms, obliged his royal Mistress to quit the Kingdom, and retire to her own Dominions beyond Sea. ^{ibid. p. 129. 130.}

HENRY THE SECOND in all his Reign had but one PRIME MINISTER; to whom all the Troubles, or the Seeds at least of all the Troubles of his Life were owing. This was the famous *Thomas Becket*, who was for some Years the sole Manager of all Affairs of State, and was entrusted with the Care of the Education of the King's eldest Son. But this wicked Minister was no sooner raised to an independent State, than he enter'd into an open Opposition to his Master; distressed him in all his Councils; and concerted such Measures with the young Prince, who had been under his Tuition, as produced an open Rupture between the Father and Son, which lasted even after the Author of it had been long bury'd; and to which the ill Conduct of Queen *Eleanor* not a little contributed. Many indeed have imputed all the Disasters of this unhappy Reign (which ended in a Conspiracy of the two Sons against their Father, that broke his Heart) to the Judgments of Heaven upon the King, inasmuch as He had sinn'd against the Laws of Nature and of Conscience in the beginning of his Reign, by an open Violation and Disobedience of his Father's Will. ^{ibid. p. 143. 144. 145.}

1189.
ibid. p.
 151.
 153.

RICHARD THE FIRST, as he spent the greatest Part of his Time beyond Sea, so he unhappily vested his whole Power in the narrow Hands of one PRIME MINISTER, *the Bishop of Ely*; who soon exerted his *Authority*, independent of his *Master*. History informs us, that he not only imprisoned and oppressed the King's best Subjects, but even turned out his *personal Favourites*. He excluded the Nobility and those Ministers, whom the King had joined in Commission with him, from any Share of Government, and acted in so arbitrary and insolent a Manner, as render'd him odious to the whole Kingdom. The Nation, no longer able to bear with his Oppression, invited from beyond Sea *Earl John*, who had thereby an Opportunity of assuming the Government, whilst his unhappy Brother the *King* (being taken Prisoner by the Emperor, in his Return from the Holy Land) had well nigh lost his Life and Kingdom, by thus imprudently putting the Reins of Government into the Hands of *one ill-chosen Minister*, who could not hold them.

1199.

ibid. p.
 155.
 160.

ibid. p.
 161.
 163.

KING JOHN, who succeeded him, was a poor, weak Prince, govern'd by the Man, who had the best Address to flatter him, and most of all by such, who offered him new Methods of raising Money on the People. By this Secret *Hubert*, Archbishop of *Canterbury*, became the *sole Director* of his Councils; which he conducted in such an arbitrary Manner, as to raise a civil War; in the very beginning of which, this *pecuniary Projector* dyed. His Successor in Favour and in Power was *John Gray*, a *Norfolk Man*, who for his private Interest (as the Historian reports) engaged his Master first in *idle Contests abroad* with the *Pope* and the *King of France*; and then persuaded him to mean Submissions to these very Enemies, he
 had

(II)

had procured him, which disgusted all the Subjects at home; for the Nation could not bear that Strangers should offer *Indignities* to the King and Kingdom, with Impunity. This *Norfolk Man*, being thus become the Object of the People's Hatred, next procured for his *Master* a considerable Body of *foreign Troops*, which he kept in Pay, in order to conquer his own Subjects; and this bad Step drew on an Invasion; so that our wretched Country was wasted by two contending Armies, till the unhappy Monarch himself, being in the End deserted on all Hands, was poisoned at *Swineshead Abbey*, and died unpitied, as he had lived unbeloved. *ibid.* p. 167.

HENRY THE THIRD, a Prince unable to learn Wisdom from his Father's Misfortunes, was all his Life a wretched Prey to *Favourites*. *Hugh*, or *Hubert de Burgh* was the first; of whom the Historian says, "That he forced the People to pay as he pleased, and not according to their Abilities." His ill Conduct bred an Insurrection against the King, who at length forsook him; being convinced of this Minister's Folly, in expending the Treasure of the Nation in *fruitless and shameful Expeditions*, and of his *Fraud*, in applying no small Share of it to his own private Use; and for his male Administration he was both disgraced and imprisoned. But no sooner was the poor Monarch delivered from this destructive *Engrosser of Power*, than he fell into the Hands of another; *Peter*, Bishop of *Winchester*. This Man and his Creatures so harrass'd the Kingdom with Taxes, that the King was forced to summon a Parliament, in order to prevent a civil War. "The Barons sent the King Word they would not come to Parliament, till he removed the Bishop of *Winchester* from his Court; which if he refused to do," *Hist. of England.* p. 173. *ibid.* p. 174. *ibid.*

“ do, they would turn him and his evil Coun-
 “ felloe out of the Realm, and choofe a new
 “ King.” And indeed this unhappy Reign was
 afterwards but one continued Scene of Oppreffion
 and civil War, occafion’d by the *wicked Minifters*,
 who fucceffively engross’d the Sovereign’s Ear,
 and made him quarrel with his worthieft Sub-
 jects; ’till at laft one *Prime Minifter* (*Simon de*
Montfort, Earl of *Leicefter*) whom he had raifed
 from nothing, employed all the Power his Mafter
 had weakly put into his Hands, in Oppofition to
 him. He firft raifed an Army, and then attack’d
 the King at *Lewis*, where he defeated and took
 him Prifoner, and kept him under clofe Confinement
 for near two Years, himfelf all the while
 governing the Nation in his Name; till the brave
Prince Edward flew this traiterous *Prime Mini-*
fter at *Evesham*, and thereby fet both the King
 and Kingdom at Liberty.

EDWARD THE FIRST, who may well be rank-
 ed amongft the greateft Princes, that ever reign’d
 in this or any other Country, never beftow’d his
 Confidence on *one Man* only, but fought the ableft
 of his Nobles for publick Pofts, in which he gave
 to each an equal Share of Power. He feverely
 punifhed every one in Employment, who was found
 guilty of Oppreffion or Injuftice; and no lefs than
 thirteen of his Judges were at one Time con-
 demn’d by him for *Extortion*, and fined 100,000
 Marks, which was then as much as 800,000 would
 be at this Time. To this wife Prince we owe
 the beft Laws in being to this Day, for fecuring
 the Liberties and Properties of the Subject; for
 he in all Things confulted his People’s Intereft
 and their Inclination rather than his own. And in
 nothing was his Sagacity more remarkable, than
 in foretelling his Son’s unhappy Fate.

EDWARD

EDWARD THE SECOND (as History informs ^{p. 202.} us) was very popular at first. "Never Prince came to the Crown with greater Love and more general Applause of all his Subjects, than he did ; which might have been secured to him by a little wise Management." But when it appeared he hated all *his Father's real Friends*, and ^{ibid.} that he violated his Father's last Will, by recalling *Gaveston* from Banishment ; the Aversion to him grew as universal as the Applause had been. His *Prime Minister Gaveston* became so odious to ^{ibid. p. 203.} the Nation, that the *Nobles* rose in Arms against him, and having seized upon him, they executed ^{p. 204.} him without a Tryal. This *Minion* was no sooner destroyed, than two others rose in his Stead ; ^{p. 206,} the *Spensers*, Father and Son. These Men so vexed the People with their arbitrary Impositions, that ^{p. 207.} it drew on a civil War ; in which one of the *Spensers* ^{p. 209,} was taken by the Nobles, and put to Death as ^{210.} a Traytor ; and the poor Monarch himself lost his Crown and his Life soon after.

EDWARD THE THIRD, in his Minority, was under the usurp'd Tuition of the Queen his Mother. During her weak Administration, *Mortimer* ^{1327. ibid. p. 211.} was *sole Minister*. His base Murder of the deposed King, his scandalous Treaty with the *Scots*, ^{ibid. p. 212.} his rapacious Sale of publick Offices, and his open ^{p. 213.} Robbery of the Nation's Treasure, had so dishonoured and incensed the whole Kingdom, that whilst he was wholly taken up with inventing new Methods for aggrandizing himself and all his Kindred, the *Nobles* conspired to seize upon his Person ; which being done, they forced the Queen ^{ibid.} to call a Parliament ; in which she herself was stripped of all her ill-conducted Authority, and her *Minion Mortimer* was hang'd and drawn at *Tyburn*. During the rest of this long and glorious Reign, ^{ibid.} there

there was no *Prime Minister*, but many of those Statesmen, whom the King employed, were at different Times called by him to a strict Account for base Practices, in raising *oppressive Taxes*, and for *corrupt Dealing* in the Treasury. The Chancellor, Treasurer, Chief Justice, and Five more, were for these Crimes imprisoned in the Year 1340; and the Archbishop of *Canterbury* was disgraced for the same ill Conduct in 1341. The severe Punishments inflicted by this *wise Monarch* on corrupt Judges; the wholesome Laws made by him to repress Luxury and Vice of every Kind; his watchful Care over our *British* Trade and Manufactures, and the wise Acts of Parliament passed by him, for the Encouragement and Improvement of our staple Commodities; the many glorious Successes his Arms were blest with Abroad, and the happy Quiet his Subjects enjoyed at home, are all of them so many Demonstrations, that this great King was not in the Hands of a *Prime Minister*.

RICHARD THE SECOND, by not treading in these Steps, lost both his Crown and his Life. The Historian relates, "That he came to the Throne with great Advantages; the People were enamoured with him, and received him for their King with universal Joy and Satisfaction; the Loss of their brave King, so lately deceased, was quite forgotten, being swallowed up with the Hopes of that Happiness, which they promised themselves under this his Successor."

But the Scene was so entirely changed in a few Years Time, and the Taxes grew so insupportable, (more from the *Method of collecting them*, than from their Quantity) that one Rebellion was no sooner quell'd, than another broke out. The King himself seem'd only to have assumed the Government, that he might throw his own Power into the

Hist. of
England,
Vol. 1. p.
216.

ibid. p.
218.

p. 244.

1377.
Hist. of
England,
p. 237.

ibid. p.
244.
246.
247.

the Hands of a corrupt *Prime Minister, Michael de la Pole, Earl of Suffolk*. He had grown so suddenly from a low to a rich Estate, by Bribery in his Office and by embezzling the publick Money, by Grants from the Crown to him and his Family, and by oppressing the Subjects with illegal Taxes, for which he afterwards compounded with them in private; that in the End, the Parliament petitioned the King to remove him from his Councils; and the King, being in no Condition to dispute the Point, at length consented to this Demand. " And then (says the Historian) it appeared how good a Prince King Richard was, when separated from evil Counsel. *ibid. p. 255. p. 256.*

" The guilty Minister was with the Royal Approbation deposed from all his Offices; his Estate of 1000 l. a Year (equal to 10,000 l. now) was confiscated, and he was fined in twenty thousand Marks." But the poor Monarch could not long hold the Reins of Government himself; he soon chose another *Prime Minister*, full as wicked as the former, *Robert Duke of Ireland*. His first Step was to screen *Michael de la Pole*; he persuaded the King to remit his Fine and restore him to his Estate, and to discountenance those Nobles, who had procured his Disgrace; telling his deluded Sovereign, " That the main Aim of those Nobles, who procured the Sentence on *Pole*, was to dethrone him by disgracing his first Minister; for that it was an easy Inference, that the King is not fit to rule, who knows not whom to trust. By these and such like Arguments the King was wrought up to the Ruin of those Lords, whom these bad Ministers accounted their Enemies." Several Projects were formed to destroy them by Force; but the universal Love the Nation bore them made this impracticable. *Hist. of England, Vol. I. p. 257. ibid. p. 258.*

ble. The *Minister* try'd to pack a *Parliament*; but That too was found impossible, the Nation being in a Flame against the Court. These Attempts, proving unsuccessful, produced a civil War, in which the *Ministerial Forces* being routed, the *Duke of Ireland* and the *Earl of Suffolk* were both forced to fly from publick Justice. " But the chief " Tool of their Power, Sir *Robert Tresilian*, being " seized, was condemned in Parliament, and pursuant to their Sentence drawn through the City " of *London* on a Hurdle, and hanged at Tyburn." After this publick Act of Justice, the Nation was at Quiet for some few Years, till the *Earl of Rutland* (after that created *Duke of Aumerle*) became *Prime Minister*. He, fearing the Fate of his Predecessors, resolved to remove those sturdy Patriots out of the Way, who had accomplish'd the Ruin of the *Duke of Ireland* and *Earl of Suffolk*. He therefore pack'd a House of Commons by wicked Means, and got the *Earl of Arundel* and others to be impeached, condemned and executed. This, and many other Acts of Oppression, so disgusted the City of *London* (from whence the Disgust spread through the whole Kingdom) that every thing was ripe for a civil War. In this Condition were Affairs, when the *Prime Minister*, as if designedly to compleat his Master's Ruin, perswaded him to go over to his Dominion of *Ireland*; where he had no sooner landed, than the *Duke of Lancaster*, with a small Body of foreign Troops, invaded this Kingdom; and having seized upon some of the chief Instruments of the *Minister's* Tyranny, and put them to Death, was by the whole Nation received as their Deliverer. The King, upon this News, returned from *Ireland*, with an Army sufficient to have maintain'd his Crown, had they adher'd to him; but

see

ibid. p.
261.

p. 263.

ibid. p.
276.

p. 278,

279.

p. 280.

ibid. p.
281.

Hist. of
England,
Vol. 1. p.
293.

see the Fidelity, that may be expected from all *Prime Ministers!* The *Duke of Aumerle*, to whom the present Distress of the King's Affairs was chiefly owing, was the *first* that deserted him; *ibid.* p. dismiss'd his best Troops, and fled over to the ^{284.} *Duke of Lancaster*, with 500 Men. *Richard the Second* was soon after himself betrayed into the Hands of his Enemy; deposed from the Throne ^{p. 286.} by his Parliament; and at last murdered in his ^{p. 287.} Prison.

Henry the Fourth, who succeeded him, as he ^{1399.} came to the Crown by the People's Choice, so he maintained himself in the Possession of it, by consulting their Interest. He never placed his Power out of his own Hands; his Reign was indeed disturbed by civil Wars, which his disputed Title, and the Burthen of necessary Taxes drew upon him; for, as the Historian observes, *People do* ^{*ibid.* p. 305.} *not love to buy even Happiness too dear.* But his wise Conduct, the able Ministers he employed, and the Equality he maintain'd in the Distribution of his Favours, with his constant Care of the Trade and Honour of this Nation, made him at last a Victor over all his Enemies, both at home and abroad, and laid the Foundation of his Son's Greatness and Glory.

Henry the Fifth, during his short but glorious ^{1413.} Reign, had no *Prime Minister*. The Historian ^{*ibid.* p. 308.} says, "He chose his Counsellors amongst the ^{*ibid.* p. 333.} "gravest and wisest of his Nobility; he went in ^{*ibid.* p. 333.} "Progress through many Parts of his Kingdom, ^{*ibid.* p. 333.} "and received all Complaints of male Administration with Chearfulness, even from the meanest ^{*ibid.* p. 333.} "of his People. All Abuses of his Authority he ^{*ibid.* p. 333.} "immediately reform'd, not sparing the ^{*ibid.* p. 333.} "of his Ministers, when he found them guilty ^{*ibid.* p. 333.} "of Misdemeanors;" telling them, "That since ^{*ibid.* p. 333.} "They

“ They had no Respect to *his Honour*, which
 “ was wounded by *their Injustice*, He could have
 “ no Motive to favour them, but punish them the
 “ more severely; because, for the Sake of a little
 “ Gain or Friendship, They had robb’d him of
 “ what he most valued, his People’s Love and
 “ Affection.

1422.

Henry the Sixth was the Reverse of his wife and great Father, in the whole Conduct of his long, weak, and turbulent Reign. He had no sooner taken into his Hands the Power of the Government, than he bestowed the whole Administration of it on one *wicked Minister* or another, ’till by their Means he was deprived of his Dignity, Liberty and Life. *William de la Pole* was his first *Prime Minister*, and was supported in his Power by the Ascendant the Queen had gain’d over her Husband, even after the King had conceiv’d a just Aversion for him. The Oppression of the Subject at home, the Losses we sustain’d abroad, and the Contempt brought upon our Councils, by *Suffolk’s* Ignorance and Blunders, rais’d the Nation’s Discontent to the highest Pitch. They said, “ It was no Injury to pitch upon
 1. 397. “ another King, since the present Sovereign had
 “ deposed himself in Effect, by suffering the Queen
 p. 401. “ and *Suffolk* to over-rule all.” The Commons at length impeach’d him for Treason, and the Lords committed him to the Tower; but during a Recess of Parliament, the Queen procured his Enlargement, and restored him to his former Favour. This was so highly resented by the Nation, that the Court were obliged at last to banish him, in order to save his Life; but That proved ineffectual; for the Ship, in which he embark’d for *France*, was pursued and taken by another Ship belonging to the Duke of *Exeter*, and *Suffolk* himself

Hist. of
England,
Vol. I. p.

393.

ibid. p.

395.

1. 397.

p. 401.

p. 402.

felf was beheaded by the Captain near *Dover Sands*. The next *Prime Minister* in this Reign *ibid.* ^{p. 409.} was the *Duke of Somerset*; who, as History informs us, " rose high in Favour with the King and Queen, ruling and governing all, as he pleased. " The Nation was by no Means disposed to a Re- ^{p. 411.} bellion against the King; (for no Harm was meant Him, good Man, who did no Ill to any, and desired the Nation's Welfare in all Things) but against the Queen, the *Duke of Somerset*, and his Cabal, who usurped the regal Authority. The first Attempt the Nobles made was on the *Duke of Somerset*, whom they caused to be arrested in the Queen's Bed-Chamber, and sent to the Tower, in order to answer the Crimes that should be laid to his Charge in the ensuing Parliament. Accordingly he was there accused of high Treason; but by the Queen's Influence that Parliament was dissolved and the Duke was set at Liberty." Upon This, the *Nobles* rose in Arms, and declared *ibid.* for the *House of York*; the Court too raised an Army, which was totally defeated; the King himself " was taken Prisoner, and the *Prime Minister* ^{p. 412.} " was slain in the Action." The rest of this Reign was one continued Scene of civil War, till it ended in the King's Murder, and in the Transfer of the Crown to another Family. The Character gi- *ibid.* ^{p.} ven this Prince in History is, " That he might ^{427.} " have been as good a King as *England* ever had, " if he had been guided by a wise and good Coun- " cil; but he was ruled by *Favourites* and by his " Queen, whose ambitious assuming the regal " Power beyond her Sphere made it thought no " Rebellion to take it out of her Hands, and put " it where it would be better ordered, and was " more due. The King's Fall was much pitied, " because, as to his Person, undeserved; but the

“ common Good so much required a Change,
 “ that it was judged better *One suffer an Injury,*
 “ *rather than the whole Nation perish.*

1461.

Hist. of
England,
Vol. I. p.
 433.

Edward the Fourth, though perhaps too much addicted to Pleasure, was in the main a wise and able Monarch. He never had a *Prime Minister*; but relied upon the Advices of a well-chosen Council, and on his own Abilities. This Conduct acquired him a Crown, and This recovered it for him, when it was snatcht away by the Treachery of some, in whom he most confided. As his own good Capacity always led him into the Measures, most conducive to the Honour and Interest of the Kingdom, so That made him in general more an Object of the People's Affections, than was to be expected in a Time of such Confusion and Bloodshed. The only Weakness of his Reign (and, as Sir *Thomas More* observes, by which Occasion was given after his Death, to the Usurpation of his Brother *Richard*) was his over Fondness for the Queen; at whose Importunity he promoted her *fast Friends*, beyond what either their Birth or Abilities could entitle them to; by which the *antient Nobility* and the *great Commoners* were disoblged.

ibid. p.
 441.

p. 445.

p. 449.
ibid. p.
 478.
 p. 481.
 p. 482.

1483.

Edward the Fifth, by this bad Politicks of his Father, lost his Crown and Life.

1483.

ibid. p.
 499.
 p. 501.

Richard the Third, in his short Reign, afforded no Instance of a *Prime Minister*, unless the Duke of *Buckingham* may deserve that Title. He it was, who first set the Crown on this *Usurper's* Head; but either he was not gratified, according to his Expectations; or else he was apprehensive that his Master could not long maintain his ill-acquired Dignity; for he soon after engaged in a Conspiracy against him, which proved fatal to them both; for the Duke was at first taken and beheaded as a Traytor; but the Storm, he had raised,

ibid. p.
 505.
 p. 506.

raised, was not to be quelled, but by the Death of *ibid.* p. 512.
the *Usurper*.

Henry the Seventh was indeed too prudent a ^{1485.}
Prince, to trust his *whole Power* in the Hands of
any one *Minister*; and yet he often gave more Au-
thority to a *Few*, than was consistent either with
his great Sagacity, or his Interest. An unhappy ^{p. 636.}
Love of Money frequently betrayed him into this
Mistake in Government, and made him rather em-
ploy the *base Instruments* of gratifying that Pas-
sion, than *THOSE*, who were better qualify'd for
the real Service of the State. To this *unpopular*
Foible, in a *British* Sovereign, were owing many
of those Insurrections, which, under a weaker Po-
litician, must have ended in Destruction. The *Hist. of*
oppressive Subsidy in 1489 (though granted in ^{England.}
Parliament) caused a Rebellion in the *North*, in ^{Vol. I. p.}
which the chief Promoter of the Tax, the *Earl of* ^{595.}
Northumberland, fell a Sacrifice to popular Resent-
ment. Another Parliamentary Aid in 1496 was
so grievous to the *Cornish* Men, that they rose in ^{*ibid.* p.}
Arms, to oppose the levying it; and after some ^{617.}
Success in the *West*, marched in a Body on to ^{p. 618.}
London, and came as far as *Black Heath*, where ^{p. 619.}
they encounter'd the royal Forces in a pitch Bat-
tle. Towards the latter End of this Reign, the
King's Love of Money increasing with his Age,
Empson and *Dudley*, *THOSE LEECHES OF THE* ^{*ibid.* p.}
PEOPLE (as Lord *Bacon* calls them) built their ^{629.}
Greatness upon their *singular Talents* of devising ^{p. 630.}
new Methods, how to raise Money; in which they ^{p. 631.}
so cruelly squeez'd and oppress'd the Subjects,
whilst the King's Coffers abounded with Treasure,
which he could not use, that in the End the whole
Kingdom was disposed to rebel. The Historian
therefore recounts it, as one of the Felicities of
this Reign, " That an opportune Death with- ^{*ibid.* p.}
" drew ^{635.}

“ drew the King from any future Blow of Fortune ; which certainly, in Regard of the great Hatred of his People, had not been impossible to have come upon him.

1509. *Henry the Eighth* found no other Method of recalling the *lost Affections* of his Subjects, but by giving up to publick Justice those two wicked Ministers, *Empson* and *Dudley* ; who, being guilty of that very worst of Treasons, *alienating the People's Hearts from their Sovereign*, were beheaded on the 18th of *August*, 1510. This wise Act procured the new King the whole Nation's Love ; which he preserved for many Years, 'till the oppressive Conduct of his own *Prime Minister*, *Wolfsey*, stagger'd their Loyalty. The Character of this ambitious Statesman has been so often set forth of late, in all its Colours, that I shall only observe at present, that he engaged his Master in many fruitless, inglorious Expeditions abroad, which sunk the Honour as much as they drained the Treasure of the Nation ; that He was so insolent as to usurp the *regal Style* ; seldom speaking of his Master's Actions, but under the Title, *We did so* ; that he sold his *Sovereign's Alliance*, by Turns, to every Potentate in *Europe* ; 'till at length there was scarce a Prince left, who thought it worth the purchasing ; and last of all, that he accumulated so vast an Estate, as to form a Project of making himself independent of the Crown. I shall end his Character, with what the Writer of those Times, the most partial to Him, the *Lord Herbert* says, “ One Error was that *He and His* were “ invested with a *bateful Multiplicity of Offices and* “ *Places* ; which as it drew much Envy on the “ *Cardinal* in particular, so it derogated no little “ from the *regal Authority*, while one Man alone “ seemed to exhaust it all. Since it becometh “ Princes

1509.

Hist. of
England.
Vol. 2.

p. 3.

p. 5.

ibid. p. 6.

p. 14.

ibid. p. 16.

p. 24.

p. 50.

p. 55.

p. 58.

ibid. p. 25
30. 34.

p. 70. 83.
85.

p. 106.

Hist. of
England.
Vol. 2. p.
124.

p. 125.

ibid. p. 149.

“ Princes to do, like the good Husbandmen, when
 “ they sow the Ground, which is to scatter, and
 “ not throw all in one Place. The Disgrace and
 “ Imprisonment of this *overgrown Monster of*
 “ *Power* (in which he died of Grief) soon reco-
 “ vered the straying Affections of the People, who
 “ were never more effectually gain’d, than by *such*
 “ *a Sacrifice*; but this *happy Turn* lasted not long.
 The popular Discontents were revived by the
 many Changes in Religion, and by the exorbitant
 Power thrown into the Hands of *Cromwell*, who *ibid. p.*
 was made *Privy Seal, Lord Chamberlain, Knight* 202.
of the Garter, and Vicegerent general in Spirituals. p. 222.
 To him *Lord Herbert* attributes the Taxes in
 1536, which occasioned a most formidable Rebel- *ibid. p.*
 lion in *Lincolnshire, Yorkshire*, and other Parts; and 205.
 consisted of no less than 30,000 Men, who were *p. 206.*
 not dispers’d, but upon Promise of calling a *Free* *p. 207.*
Parliament. To him He likewise attributes the
 heavy Taxes in 1539, which he says, “ equally *p. 222.*
 “ oppress’d both the Clergy and the Laity; and *ibid. p.*
 “ made the Author of them so universally hated, 223.
 “ that the King gave Way to the Accusations
 “ against him; and then it was evident he must
 “ fall. For it was impossible that one, who med-
 “ dled so much in all the great and publick Af-
 “ fairs, should not in diverse so mistake and err,
 “ as to incur the Note of a Criminal, when In-
 “ quisitions were made against him. The Dis-
 “ grace and Imprisonment of *Cromwell* was recei-
 “ ved by the People with many Acclamations,
 “ that witness their Joy; *so impatient are they usu-*
 “ *ally of the good Fortune of FAVOURITES.* And
 “ all former Faults being imputed to Him, every
 “ one began to hope for a better Age. He was
 “ attainted in Parliament of Crimes great and
 “ enormous, and such as deserved capital Punish-
 ment;

ment; but as He was not permitted to answer for himself, the Proceedings were thought rigorous; but so few pitied Him, that all was past over, and he was executed on *Tower-bill* "in *July 1540.*" The rest of this Reign, as it was free from any *Prime Minister*, so was it likewise from *Rebellions.*

ibid. p.
225.

1547.

Edward the Sixth, during his short Reign of Minority, had no less than *two Prime Ministers.* The first was the *Duke of Somerset*; who, though Uncle to the King, and Protector of the Kingdom by Election, could not avoid the Fate, that in this Country naturally attends on too much Power, when vested in the Hands of *one Subject.* *The engrossing the regal Authority* was his only Crime; This raised *Insurrections* through the Kingdom; This united the chief of the *Nobility* against him; This procured his Imprisonment in the Tower in 1549; and lost him his Head in 1552. The ambitious Author of his Ruin, the *Duke of Northumberland*, succeeded him in Power, and soon became the Object of the Nation's Hatred; He even contrived to fix the Crown upon a *Lady*, who had married into his own Family; and when he had brought his royal Master to consent to that Settlement, he was strongly suspected to have poisoned him. *Sir John Hayward* and *Godwyn* both agree that this Suspicion was founded on no trivial Conjectures. The former of these Writers says, "The People left nothing unspoken, which might serve to stir Hatred against *Northumberland*, and Pity towards the King; but the Duke was nothing moved hereat; for being equally obstinate, both in Purpose and Desire, and mounting his Hopes above the Pitch of Reason, he resolved then to dissemble no longer, but began
" openly

Hist. of
England,
Vol. I. p.
308.
ibid. p.
296. 297.
p. 300.
p. 306.
p. 307.
324.
ibid. p.
325.
p. 326.
p. 327.

p. [325.]

“ openly to play his Game ; a Game, for which
 “ he justly lost his Head in the succeeding Reign.

Queen Mary, in her Reign, had but one *Prime Minister*, *Gardiner*, Bishop of *Winchester*; who p. 333. Hist. of England, Vol. I. p. 351. made the Nation a Scene of Blood and Desolation, in order to obtain for himself a Cardinal's Hat. For that Purpose, he promoted and accomplish'd that hateful *Spanish Match*, which, had it proved fruitful, must have made this Island a Province dependent on *Spain*. It met with the universal Disapprobation of the People, and raised a Rebellion; which, but for an accidental Disappointment, had probably overturned the whole Government. This avowed Disgust occasioned p. 341. p. 342. p. 345. those Articles in the Treaty of Marriage, whereby the Liberties of this Kingdom were secured, as much as Words can secure against Power. *Gardiner's blundering Politicks*, in contriving so unnatural an Alliance, soon involved the Nation in a War ibid. p. 354. p. 356. ibid. p. 358. with *France*, in which we lost that important Harbour of *Calais*; a Loss, which so affected the poor, deluded *Queen*, as to be the immediate Occasion of her Death.

Queen Elizabeth succeeded; and, in her long, 1558. wise and glorious Reign, not one *Prime Minister* appeared. Her People's Love was the strong Basis of her Government, as their Interest was the only Drift of her Councils. *Camden* says, “ On Hist. of England, Vol. I. p. 369. all, whom she ever admitted into her Ministry, “ she bestowed her Favours with so much Caution “ and so little Distinction, as to prevent any from “ getting the Ascendant over Her; whereby she “ remain'd Mistress of her self, preserving their “ Affections, and her own Power and Authority “ entire.” Upon this Maxim she always modell'd her Ministry; therefore, in 1568, she protected Hist. of England, Vol. I. p. 417. *Cecil* (afterwards Lord *Burleigh*) even against her
 D greatest

greatest *personal Favourite*, the *Earl of Leicester*, who with other Lords had conspired his Overthrow ; and some Years after, she as firmly supported *Leicester* against the Artifices of *Cecil*.

ibid. p. 471. 541. She sent the *Earl of Leicester* in 1586, to assist the *Dutch* against the King of Spain. He was there-

upon chosen Governor of the united Provinces ; but no sooner did *the States* complain of him, for abusing his great Power, but this just *Queen* recalled her *Favourite* with Disgrace. The Person, whom she next honoured with the highest Marks

ibid. p. 608. p. 609. of her Favour, was the *Earl of Essex* ; but when he began to affect a Superiority over his *Fellow Ministers*, assuming more Authority than his Mis-

p. 626. tress intended for his Share, she openly curbed his overweening Ambition ; turned him out of his Employments ; and called him to Account for his Conduct in them. This aspiring Statesman here-

ibid. p. 629. 630. upon enter'd into *Cabals* against her Measures, in order to *force* himself into *Place* ; his principal Scheme for this Purpose was, by contriving a Rup-

ibid. p. 637. ture between *the Queen* and *the next Heir* to the Crown ; which proving abortive, he was at last constrained to undergo the just Punishment of his traiterous Conspiracies.

1603. *James the First* succeeded this great Queen ; and though he was too weak to tread in her Steps, yet he reaped many happy Benefits from her just Administration ; which had created in the Minds of the whole People such an habitual Reverence for the Throne, as all his bad Policy could never quite extinguish. His was, in Truth, the Reign of *Prime Ministers*. Sir *Robert Car* was the first ; who, for some Time, was forced to share in Power with the wise *Cecil*, Earl of *Salisbury* ; and so long Affairs were tolerably well conducted ; “ but, “ upon *Cecil's* Death, *Sir Robert* took full Possessi-

“ on

ibid. p. 691.

become popular at the Expence of his *Master's Honour*, by opposing all his Measures in this Affair. He first proposed to the *Prince* a Journey into *Spain*, which he afterwards forced the King to consent to ; “ and this, (as Lord *Clarendon* “ says) proved the Means, whereby that designed “ Marriage, which had been so many Years in “ Treaty, was solely broken ; for, upon their Re- “ turn, the King found that the *Prince* was totally “ aliened from all Thoughts of, or Inclination to “ the Marriage ; and that He, as well as the “ *Duke*, was resolved to break it, without his “ Approbation or Consent.” The Duke therefore, seconded by the Countenance the Prince gave him, engaged the Parliament to address the King against the *Spanish Match*, and to enter into a War with *Spain*. He likewise projected the Ruin of the *Earl of Middlesex*, then Lord Treasurer, and one of the King’s most favoured Ministers ; which he accomplished, by procuring some leading Men in the House of Commons to carry up an Impeachment against *that Lord* to the House of Peers ; and there conducting Matters so, as to get him to be condemned to a large Fine, and long Imprisonment. And now he knew the King would never forgive him ; he therefore resolved to keep his Power in spite of him ; which he found no other Means of effecting, but by fomenting a Breach between the *King* and the *Prince*, and engaging the *Son* to head the Opposition to his *Father's Measures*. The Vexation this gave the *old Monarch*, meeting with an Aguish Disposition in his Blood, soon turned *that* into a violent Fever, in which he died ; not without strong Suspicion of his being poisoned by a *Plaster*, which *Buckingham* applied to his Side. And this Suspicion was the more confirmed, inasmuch as it was well known (as my Lord

Clayden's
Hist. of
Rebellion,
Vol. I.
Book 1.
p. 18.
ibid. p.
19.

ibid. p.
21, 22.

ibid. p.
23.

ibid. p.
23, 24.

Hist. of
England,
Vol. II.
p. 784.

Hist. of
England,
Vol. II.
p. 790.
791.

Lord Clarendon says). " That when King James Clarend.
 " was informed what the Duke had so confidently *Hist. of*
 " avowed in Parliament, for which he had not *Rebellion,*
 " Authority, or the least Direction from him, and *Vol. I.*
 " a great Part whereof himself knew to be false ; *Book I.*
 " and that he had advised an utter Breach of the *p. 22.*
 " Treaty ; and to enter upon a War with Spain,
 " He was infinitely offended. So that he wanted
 " only a resolute and *brisk Counsellor* to assist him
 " in destroying the Duke ; and such an one he
 " promis'd himself in the *Earl of Bristol*, whom
 " he expected every Day." No Wonder then if
 this poor King did not long survive the Earl of
Bristol's Return to England.

Charles the First, as the Lord Clarendon says, 1625.
 " came to the Crown with as universal a Joy in
 " the People, as can be imagined. It was *ex-ibid. p.*
 " pected by Those, who knew the great Jealousy *24, 25.*
 " and Indignation, that the *Prince* had heretofore
 " conceived against the *Duke of Buckingham*, for
 " having been once very near striking him, That
 " He would now remember that Insolence, of
 " which He then so often complained. But in-
 " stead of that, He placed his intire Confidence
 " in him, the most that ever King had shewed to
 " any Subject. All Preferments in the Church
 " and State were given by him ; all his *Kindred*
 " and his *Friends* were promoted to the Degree
 " in Honour, Riches or Offices, that He thought
 " fit, and all his Enemies and Envyers were discour-
 " tenanced, as he appointed. This soon wrought
 " a visible Change in the Affections of the Na-
 " tion towards their Sovereign." The fruitless *ibid. p.*
 Expeditions abroad, and the oppressive Methods *26. 38.*
 of raising Money at home, joined to the *innate* *Hist. of*
Hatred this Nation bears to PRIME MI- *England,*
Vol. III.
 NISTERS, raised a Discontent against the Govern- *p. 9.*
 ment, *p. 26.*

ment, which even *this Man's Death* (being by a private Hand) could not appease. Lord *Clarendon* says himself that "The Venom of his Time encreas'd and got Vigour, till from one Licence to another it proceeded, until the Nation was corrupted to that monstrous Degree, that it grew satiated and weary of the Government."

Indeed the continuing the same Measures, this *Prime Minister* had set on Foot, till the Liberties of the Nation were thought in Danger, and in the End the listening almost entirely to the Counsel of the Earl of *Strafford* (who from a busy *Stickler* for Liberty in one Administration, was become the Instrument of arbitrary Power in another) brought on that dismal Scene of Confusion, in which the King was unhappily deprived of his Crown, Liberty and Life.

Thus I have given a short Account of the Reigns, from the Conquest down to the Restoration, as to that single Article of *Prime Ministers*; which I shall close with one remarkable Sentence of the *Historian*, whose Authority I have chiefly made Use of in the foregoing Pages. "The *Favourites* of every Prince were always odious to the *English* People. Not only Self-Love, Envy, Ambition, Disgust and Revenge do naturally create an Aversion to any ONE Subject, who seems to engross and appropriate to himself the common Father of the People. But the laudable Affections, that prompt to Impartiality, Tenderness to our Prince, and Love to our Country, all conspire to make every indifferent Person an Enemy to the ONE powerful *Fellow-Member*, that commands over the Head, and usurps over the whole Body."

It would scarce have been safe, I am sure it would not have been prudent, thus to entertain the

Jarend.
list. of
rebellion,
vol. I.
book 1.
41.

list. of
England,
vol. III.
47.
48.

list. of
England,
vol. III.
48.
63.
65.
71.
93.

ibid. p. 5.

the Publick with the dismal Consequences, that have hitherto followed, upon vesting all Power in *One Man*, but at a Time like *This*, when it is the Joy of all good Men to see that there is no one *Prime Minister* at the Helm; but that several *equally able, equally virtuous and great Men* jointly draw on the *well-ballanced Machine of State*, which therefore cannot, as I pray it may not, *totter*.

I shall conclude this short Abstract of History with the Observation of as *wise* a Politician, as ever *England* bred. “ That there never yet was “ a *Prime Minister* in *Britain*, but either broke “ his *own Neck*, or his *Master's*, or *both*, unless “ He saved his *own* by sacrificing his *Master's*.

As the Reader may perhaps be desirous to behold at one View the diverse Casualties of the sundry *Prime Ministers* above-mentioned, I have here subjoined a Table of Them.

PRIME MINISTERS.

DY'D by the Halter	— — — —	3
Ditto by the Axe	— — — —	10
Ditto by STURDY BEGGARS	— — — —	3
Ditto untimely by private Hands	— — — —	2
Ditto in Imprisonment	— — — —	4
Ditto in Exile	— — — —	4
Ditto Penitent	— — — —	1
Saved by sacrificing their Master	— — — —	4
Sum Total of PRIME MINISTERS	— — — —	31